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NEW EXPOSITION OF THE SCIENCE OF KNOWLEDGE.

Translated from the German of J. G. FICHTE by A. E. KRÖGER.

Part First.

Knowledge posits itself as a Power of formal Freedom of Quantitating determined through an absolute Being.

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§ 1. SYNTHESIS OF QUANTITY AND QUALITY IN KNOWLEDGE.

A.—Knowledge posits itself as primarily determined by its Being, and hence as limited.

Knowledge has now been found, and stands before us as a closed eye, resting upon itself. It sees nothing outside of itself, but it sees itself. This self-contemplation we have to exhaust, and with it the system of all possible knowledge is exhausted, and the Science of Knowledge realized and closed.

Firstly: this knowledge sees itself (in the intellectual contemplation) as absolute knowledge. This is the first consideration which we must make clear, for only by its means has our investigation acquired a firm standpoint.

In so far as knowledge *is* absolute for itself, it reposes upon itself, and is completed in its being and its self-contemplation. This has been explained above. But the Absolute is at the same time, *because* it is. In this respect, likewise, knowledge must be absolute for itself, if it is to be an absolute knowledge *For-itself*. This is its eye and standpoint in the intellectual contemplation.

The absolute knowledge is for-itself *because* it is, signifies therefore: the intellectual contemplation is for itself an absolute self-generation out of nothing; a free self-grasping of light, which thereby becomes a stationary glance and eye. No fact of knowledge (no being or determinedness thereof) without the absolute form of the For-itself, and consequently without the possibility, freely to be reflected upon.

But absolute knowledge must be for itself *what* it is. The just described *Because* must melt together with the inner simple *What*, and this melting together itself must be inwardly and for itself. This can be very easily expressed in the following exposition: Knowledge must be for itself simply *what* it is for the immediate reason *because* it is. The determinedness of the *What* has not its ground in the *Because*, but, on the contrary, has its ground in the Being of knowledge; the *Because*

containing merely the naked fact as such, or the *That* of a knowledge, and of a knowledge of something. Or, Freedom is here, also, purely formal; demanding only, that a knowledge, a For-itself existence, be generated; and is not material, or, does not demand that *such* a particular knowledge be generated. If knowledge did not find its nature to be generative, it would not find itself at all, and would have no existence, and of a What or a Quality of knowledge we should find it impossible to speak. But finding itself generative, it finds immediately, without generation, its *What*, and without this *What* it does not find itself generative; and this not in consequence of its Freedom, but of its absolute Being. Having thus discovered, at least, that we have to unite in knowledge not simple points, but even syntheses, we now proceed to the other links of our main synthesis.

The absolute What of Knowledge is here, as is well known, also but a mere form, the form of thinking, or of the in-itself confinedness of Knowledge. As this *What*, it is to find itself independently of all Freedom, just as Freedom finds itself. But all contemplation is Freedom — *is*, consequently, absolutely *because* it is (absolute self-generation from nothingness, as above). If this *Because* were therefore to contemplate itself, the *What in its absolute character would be annihilated*. The form of this contemplation is annihilated by its substance and vanishes in itself. It is indeed a knowledge, a For-itself, which is, however, again simply *not* for itself, a knowledge without self-consciousness; an altogether *pure* Thinking, which vanishes as such the moment we become conscious of it: an absolute knowledge of a What, without the possibility to state *whence* it comes, which Whence would be its genesis.

Here likewise there is a duplicity as there is everywhere: a Being, and a free contemplation lifting itself above the Being. But both links are not again united and melted together in the present instance as they were in the previously deduced synthesis of Freedom and Being, when we found the For-itself and the What, Contemplation and Thinking, to be melted together in the absolute unity-point of consciousness. The synthetical point of unity is here, therefore, not discoverable, and is not possible; there is a *hiatus* in the knowledge. (Each

one when asked whence he knows that he *does* this or that, replies: I know that I do such and such a thing *because* I do it;—he presupposes, consequently, an immediate connection between his doing and his knowledge, an *inseparability* of both—and since all absolute knowledge is a *saltus*—a continuity of knowledge over and beyond this *saltus*. But if you ask some one: whence he knows, for instance, that everything accidental must have the ground of its determinedness in something else, he will reply: It is absolutely so; without pretending to give a reason for the connection of this his knowledge with his other knowledge or doing. He confesses the *hiatus*.)

But both (in their immediateness separate) links form only in their unity absolute knowledge; and this absolute unity, as such, must be for itself as surely as absolute knowledge is for itself. But this unity—to explain the proposition by its opposite—would be no absolute, but merely a factual unity having its ground in Freedom, as such, if we were to express it, for instance, in this manner: “While reflecting, my reflection hit upon this”; so that it might equally as well have hit upon something else; or, “I found this while *reflecting*”; so that it might possibly have been found also by some other process. The proper expression, on the contrary, is: From the What there results absolutely *such* a reflection (not the reflection itself as a fact, for in that light it does not result at all, and is simply a *free* act, as we have abundantly shown); and from the reflection, after having been presupposed as a fact, results *such a What*.

The immediate insight into this necessary consequence—for that is what we mean by the For-itself of that unity as absolute unity—would thus be itself an absolute Thinking (an absolute contemplation of the Being of knowledge), directed upon the form of pure Thinking (as described above), as having already a for-itself existence, and upon the free reflection as a fact, and contemplating both as *being*, and as being absolutely joined together.

In this thinking, or contemplation, the whole intellectual contemplation, as we have described it above, as an absolute—not Thinking or Contemplation, but real unity of both—would be placed before its own eye as what it really is: a firm know-

ledge, reposing upon the firm ground-form of knowledge already deduced. The intellectual contemplation reflects itself; and since this cannot be done accidentally, as if the intellectual contemplation could cease to do so and still *be*, the more proper way to express is, not to say, it *does* it, but it *is* this reflection of itself. Neither can it be said that the present reflection throws its light on the previously described and (*according to our propositions*) within itself blind and in a separated duplicity disunited contemplation; for this reflection has no light within itself except what is derived from the latter, in which the For-itself of knowledge has originally realized itself. It is, consequently, always one and the same point of contemplation, absolutely illuminating itself from itself, which we have been describing throughout the whole of our investigation, although at first simply according to its outward Being (when we took the light from ourselves), and only afterwards according to its inner light.

B.—But by positing itself knowledge posits a free act of reflection as ground of its Being.

Knowledge *is* absolute *for itself*, reflects itself, and only thus does it become a knowledge. Finally, having thus become knowledge—i. e. in our successive demonstration of the subject—it is *knowledge* for itself, and reflects itself no longer as Being, for as such it does not reflect itself at all, nor as a For-itself Being, but as both in their absolute union; and only thus is it now *absolute* knowledge.

This reflection is absolutely necessary like the former one (the original reflection, which constitutes knowledge), and is simply a result of the former, of a For-itself-being of knowledge, from which it is separated only by our Science.

The characteristic nature of this reflection is at once apparent from the fact, that, making knowledge, as such, its object, composing and genetically describing it, itself must penetrate beyond this knowledge, adding and adducing links, which, although existing in the reflection—and hence for our Science which makes this reflection a knowledge, also *in* knowledge—have no existence whatever *for* knowledge itself, which we have here made the object of our reflection, and which even do not belong to absolute knowledge (for this is also em-

braced by our present reflection). (Here the self-forgetting and self-annihilating character of knowledge appears in a still clearer light.) But how it is possible for us thus seemingly to penetrate even beyond absolute knowledge, can appear only at the close of our investigation, when our Science must fully and completely explain its own possibility.

Let us immediately enter the innermost synthetical central point of this reflection. The central point of the former reflection was *absolute* knowledge, as *pure* thinking and contemplation together: Freedom of reflection determined in regard to its What, by an *absolute* What. (This was expressed as follows: Knowledge must be for-itself simply *what* it is, for the immediate reason *because* it is, &c.) Now, this knowledge reflects itself as a knowledge, and as an absolute knowledge. This does not mean on any account: it is externally for itself; as it appeared to us in our scientific reflection of the foregoing paragraph, with the present additional assurance that it is absolute, although we did so express it temporarily; but it looks through and penetrates with its glance its own nature, according to the point of union and of division thereof, and by reason of the knowledge of this point of union *is* it absolute, and does it know itself as absolute in our present reflection.

In the preceding description of knowledge the *act* of reflecting was posited as independent of its material determinedness, while on the other side its determinedness was posited as independent of the act, and it was absolutely known that these thus separated parts did nevertheless form no twofoldness. But since the point of union in which they unite—although they may remain forever divided from another point of view, which we shall not here consider—was not known, that knowledge did not really penetrate itself; and though it *was* absolute knowledge, it was not absolute knowledge *for itself*.

The last ground of the act, which as act of free reflection must always remain absolute, is its *possibility*, which lies in the absolute *form* of knowledge to be for itself; the ground of the *determinedness* of the reflection is the primary *absolute* determinedness; the ground of the absolute unity of both is understood, signifies: it is understood that the act of that reflection would not be possible (consequently could not be) without

that absolute determinedness, which is the first basis and original starting-point of all knowledge.

C.—Hence Knowledge must posit itself as both: an original determinedness of Freedom, and a Freedom as the ground of its original determinedness; or, as formal Freedom of Quantitating.

The centre of the present synthesis was absolute knowledge, encircling, determining and passing beyond all real knowledge: and we had discovered that knowledge *formaliter* could only be free, could explain itself only out of itself, and posits its ground only within itself; and that it could not be possible in any other way. But in consequence of its immediateness and of the original determinedness inseparable therefrom, which, in its infinity, can be determined, distinguished, and at the same time related only by Thinking, knowledge commences with a determined, necessary Thinking, which in the present connection can be only the absolute Thinking, and consequently *making necessary* (for absolute Thinking and necessity are one and the same) of Freedom itself. It is considered so immediately in view of its being a knowledge, a factual existence of Thinking. But in the higher reflection it is recognized as generated through absolute Freedom, through the confinedness of original Freedom to a state of immediate determinedness; and at the same time as a free passing beyond this separable determinedness, in order to relate it (by Thinking): consequently, as unity of the fixed state of determinedness and the free passing beyond this determinedness, of *Being* and *Freedom*. (The difference between absolute Being and factual Being is to be well remembered; for both determinations are transferred to one object—Thinking—and are consequently only different views of what is really one and the same.)

But—thus we argue for the present—if all knowledge is determined by this absolute law, then the knowledge of this law, as a knowledge—with which something else in knowledge is to be connected—must also be determined by it: this knowledge must consequently view itself as really generated or illuminated by Freedom; or, in other words, it must be in and for itself.

(Every one will perceive that the knowledge which in our former reflection seemed to have penetrated beyond itself,

here returns again within itself; or that only a double view of this self-encircling and self-determining knowledge is possible as an *inner* and as an *external* knowledge, and that the real focus of absolute consciousness lies probably in the uniting point of this duplicity, in the balancing between both views.—This will appear also from another representation of the subject, for example: The Thinking, that the knowledge referred to is generated by Freedom, since no knowledge can be generated in any other manner, is, as we have represented it, in reality itself a free Thinking, the subjecting of a particular instance under a general rule. Consequently, this rule must appear in and be accessible to that free Thinking. But that free Thinking signifies the freely generated actual Thinking—and this consequently presupposes itself in fixing the rule.—Or still another example: If I transfer by my own *free act* Freedom to the presupposed knowledge, I must first have this Freedom in my own free knowledge. In short, it is the same proposition which we have met in advancing all our reflections. In order to direct my knowledge with freedom upon any subject, I must know already of the subject on which I am to direct it; and in order to know of it, I must have directed my Freedom upon it; and thus on infinitely, which infinite *regressus* must even here be stopped by an absoluteness which we have now to discover.)

It is understood that this affirmation applies not only to the centre of knowledge, but through it and from it to all its syntheses.

We approach now the exposition of this knowledge in its centre. The knowledge that knowledge is *formaliter* free, is to be within and for itself. To begin with the easiest point: the first result therefore is that Freedom *is in itself* and reposes upon itself: it contemplates itself, or—which means the same, since only the inner reposing upon itself of Freedom is called contemplation—the contemplation rests; which is a balancing of knowledge between the undetermined separability (the not yet separated and distinguished infinity).

But this contemplation is not merely to *be*; it is, moreover, to posit itself as *formaliter* free; containing the *That* (to posit itself) of this Being within itself; and this formal freedom of the contemplation is to contemplate itself. (How could we possibly create this contemplation without imagination? Our

imagination furnishes the substance of the contemplation. But as we do not imagine idly at hap-hazard, but direct our imagination to the special point of our investigation, Thinking takes also part in it.) No doubt every one will find this as the result: Freedom, dissolved and running over into the undetermined separability, must, in order to become contemplation, gather itself together and seize itself in *one point*—duplicate itself—it must be even *for* itself. Only thus can it become a point of light *from* which to distribute light over the undetermined separability.

I say, only in this One point does the contemplation become light to itself; from this point, therefore, a light arises not only upon the separable, as I said just now, but also upon the two views of the separable. These two views are: a dissolving of the light within itself, and a seizing and fixed taking hold of the light; the latter from a central point, which is wanting when the light dissolves. From this standpoint we must therefore say: The focus of this contemplation of formal Freedom is neither in the central point (the *penetrated*), nor in its two qualitative *terminis* (the penetrating), but *between* both. In so far as the light has penetrated itself in such a unity point, and contemplated such penetration, and the manifoldness which is inseparable from this contemplation, as penetrated from out this unity point, the light has been factually, and the formal Freedom the That, has been immediately posited. But in so far as the light, in order to contemplate *itself*, *penetrating* the central point, now contemplates the manifold as an infinity without unity, it destroys and puts an end to the fact; and this absolute balancing between creating and destroying the fact (destroying it in order to be able to create it, and creating it in order to be able to destroy it) is, viewed from the standpoint of contemplation, the real focus of absolute consciousness. (Both united are exemplified in every contemplation: the contemplation of *Here*, for instance, is the annihilation of the undetermined infinity of *Space*, and the contemplation of *Now* the annihilation of the undetermined infinity of *Time*; while at the same time the infinity of both Space and Time is contained in the contemplation of Here and of Now, and annihilates them again in their turn. The contemplation of the determined *This* (=x) separates this x (a tree, for instance) from the infinite chain

of all the other These (trees and not-trees), and thus annihilates the latter; while, *vice versa*, all these others must be contemplated, and consequently posited as existing, if x is to be contemplated as x —that is to say, if x is to be distinguished from any other object, &c.)

It is further to be remarked here, that the Quantity—even the infinite separability—is here immediately connected with Quality, and proved to be inseparably united with the latter, as undoubtedly we were compelled to prove in explaining the idea of absolute consciousness. For the formal Freedom, which here becomes contemplation, what else can it be but the *absolute Quality* of knowledge externally? and the *contemplation* of this formal Freedom itself, what else is it than the absolute but *inner* (For-itself) Quality of Knowledge, as a knowledge? And thus we have found, even in contemplation itself—and nowhere else can we find it, since the contemplation is absolute contemplation and absolutely nothing but contemplation—that formal Freedom views itself only as the contraction of a dissolving manifoldness of *possible* light into a central point, and the distribution of this light from out this central point over a manifoldness held and really illuminated only by the central point. (The fountain of all Quantity is consequently only in *Knowledge*—that is to say, in real knowledge, in a more contracted sense of the word—in knowledge which comprehends itself as such. Every one can comprehend this sentence who has but gained a clear insight into his knowledge; and thus new light is thrown on real transcendental idealism and its caricatures. The absolute One exists only in the form of Quantity. How does it come into this form? That we see here. How does it come into knowledge itself, the qualitative, in order thereafter to enter its form of Quantity? Thereof now.)

§ 2. SYNTHESIS OF OBJECTIVITY AND SUBJECTIVITY, OR REALITY AND IDEALITY, IN THE FORM OF KNOWLEDGE.

A.—Knowledge posits itself *for* itself, or thinks itself in factual knowledge as *necessarily* such power of formal Freedom, and hence as determined in its absolute character as a knowledge of Quantitating: Objective condition of the Ego.

Absolute Being is, as we know, in absolute Thinking. This absolute Being has entered free knowledge, signifies: the contemplation, described in the preceding § 1, with its immediate

facticity, and at the same time with the annihilation of that facticity, is on that very account one and the same with thinking; and it is this in knowledge—that is to say, it is known to be the same, and is thus absolutely known. Now, what sort of a consciousness is this? Evidently a *uniting* consciousness of the absolute contemplation of formal Freedom, with an absolute going beyond this contemplation to a Thinking. In short, a taking hold of itself on the part of knowledge as terminated here and absolutely fixed in this termination. Knowledge *thinks* itself only by such a grasping of itself; it goes beyond itself only in thus grasping its *end*; consequently, in positing an *end* for itself. The manifestation of this is the feeling of *certainty*, of *conviction*, as the absolute form of feeling, and arises conjointly with the self-substantialization of knowledge—that is to say, with the knowledge that a manifold (what this manifold is, the reader will please leave undecided) *exists*.

Now this formal Freedom is the absolute ground of all knowledge—for us, as teacher of the Science of Knowledge, and—which forms the contents of our present synthesis—for *itself*. It is absolute for itself means: this Freedom, and the knowledge which it generates, are thought as simply all Freedom and all knowledge: it is *thought* as a reposing in an absolute unity. Knowledge encircles and completes itself in this Thinking as the one and entire knowledge. If we consider thinking and contemplation as two separates, their union is evidently *immediate and absolute*; it is the absolute knowledge, but which knows not nor can know anything about itself; in one word, it is the immediate feeling of *certainty** (that is to say, absoluteness, immutability) of knowledge. (We here discover once again the absolute junction of contemplation and Thinking, which we found to constitute the ground-form of knowledge; and this time explaining itself genetically in the Being of knowledge itself.)

(In order to elucidate this proposition, which it might be difficult to comprehend in this simplicity of its immediate evidence, let the reader consider the following: Above we said—

* It is for this feeling of certainty, which accompanies all true knowledge, that Fichte uses the word *Intuition* as an equivalent.

Freedom must direct itself upon something which is presupposed as determined; but in order to be able to take this direction it must know beforehand of the object, which knowledge it can have acquired only through Freedom; and since this knowledge presupposes again a determined object, we are thus thrown into an infinite progress. This progress is now done away with. Freedom requires no point outside of itself to give it a direction; Freedom is in and for itself the highest Determined—hereafter the substance of knowledge—and is posited as self-sufficient *absolutely*.

Or, since knowledge has been considered from the first as the gathering together of an undetermined manifold, the knowledge of knowledge depends on this, that we know we have comprehended the altogether uneradicable unity-character of all particular acts of knowledge, however infinitely different they may be in all other respects. But how can we know this? Not by considering and analyzing the particular, for we should never get through with it. Consequently by, in a manner, prescribing a law to the particular by this very unity. Now the question is at present about absolute knowledge; consequently, about the unity of all particular determinations of knowledge—and of the objects of knowledge, which is the same thing. A law must therefore be prescribed to this absolute knowledge, so that it can recognize itself as one, as always the same eternal and immutable One, and can thus be included in its own unity. This we have done here, and in the manner just described.)

Being is consequently united with knowledge in this way, that knowledge comprehends itself as an absolute and unchangeable Being (a Being what it is, wherein it finds itself originally confined.) The difference and the connection with our former argument is very apparent: it lies between *Freedom* and *not-Freedom*. Freedom (i. e. always the formal Freedom, with the material or quantitative freedom we have nothing to do in this whole chapter) is itself *not free*; i. e. it is latent Freedom, or Freedom in form of necessity, if there is a knowledge. Possibility of knowledge only through Freedom, necessity of the latter for actual knowledge: this is the connection with our former argument. The problem is solved, and the centre of the former synthesis is itself absorbed

in knowledge; i. e. the centre of the present synthesis is fixed. Knowledge has its end in itself; it encircles and rests upon itself as knowledge.

B.—But knowledge in positing itself for itself posits itself as free, and hence as dependent only upon its Freedom: Subjective act of the Ego.

I. As we argued in C of § 1, so here. The formal Freedom which begins all actual knowledge (because it alone can give the latter a *For*, a light-point) has been thought as the absolute condition of the possibility of all knowledge, or as the necessity which conditions the character of knowledge. This thinking, by which we fuse Freedom and necessity together, must be *for itself*, must become a knowledge returning back within itself. Consequently even this knowledge, which encircles and penetrates all actual knowledge, goes again beyond itself to construct itself within itself. (In the same manner factual knowledge went beyond itself in order to arrive at the present knowledge of it. There is a triplicity, as every one can see now, and the present synthesis is again a synthesis of the two last ones.)

We enter into the centre of it. It is not at all the question and the object of our new synthesis to discover how in the uniting knowledge anything can be known of the formal act of Freedom, for the latter is the absolute contemplation itself, and absolutely originates factual knowledge from itself and by itself, but how anything can be known of necessity, and of necessity simple and pure, independently of its application to formal Freedom in the uniting Thinking.

Necessity is absolute fixedness of knowledge, or absolute thinking, and therefore excludes from its character all mobility and all penetrating beyond itself to ask for a *Because*, and it is not what it is unless all this is excluded. Now it is to be applied in a knowledge to contemplation; consequently it must nevertheless enter knowledge, assume the form of the *For-itself*, contemplate itself, &c. But in contemplation it would see itself no longer merely as simply *what* it is, but as what it is *because* it is.

This contemplation consequently cannot contemplate itself, can arise to no knowledge of itself, because in doing so it would annihilate its form by its substance. We thus obtain

a knowledge, or (since we speak of forms generally) the *form* of a (perhaps later to be exhibited) knowledge, which absolutely does not posit itself as knowledge, but as (of course, formal) *Being*, and *as absolute upon itself reposing Being*, and which cannot be penetrated, nor permit questions about its *Because*, and which moreover does not itself go beyond itself, nor explain itself, and which finally is not either a knowledge for itself, nor anything of the kind that could be characterized as knowledge.

We have here discovered the real focus and centre of absolute knowledge. It is not to be found in the taking hold of itself on the part of knowledge (by means of formal Freedom), neither is it in its self-annihilation in absolute Being, but simply *between both*; and neither is possible without the other. It cannot take hold of itself as the *absolute* (of which we speak here, the One always coëqual, unchanging) without viewing itself as necessary, and consequently forgetting itself in this necessity; and it cannot *take hold* of necessity without *taking hold* (that is to say, without creating it) for itself. It floats between its Being and its not-Being, as it indeed must, since it carries its absolute origin *knowingly* within itself.

II. The centre and turning point of absolute knowledge is a floating between Being and not-Being of knowledge, and consequently between the being absolute and the being not absolute of Being; since the Being of knowledge cancels the absoluteness of Being, and since absolute Being cancels the absoluteness of knowledge. Let us make our standpoint firmer by a further vigorous investigation of the distinction between the Being of knowledge and absolute Being.

In order to connect our remarks with one of the links in the chain of our argument—it matters not which—let us argue thus: Knowledge cannot take hold of itself as a *knowledge* (as eternally the same and unchangeable) without viewing itself as necessary. But at present knowledge, in regard to its Being (Existence), is not at all necessary, but is grounded in absolute formal Freedom; and this must remain true as well as the former.

Now what is this peculiar Being of knowledge, in regard to which it is first necessary and not free, and at another time free and not necessary? It is true, this necessity is no other than

that of Freedom (and there can never be any other); but nevertheless it is necessity, Freedom in bondage. Hence this difficulty will easily be solved in the following manner: *If* there is a knowledge at all, it must be necessarily free (latent freedom); for freedom constitutes its character. But *that* there is a knowledge at all, depends altogether upon absolute Freedom, and it might therefore just as well be not. We will assume this answer to be correct, and see how it is *possible*. (In this investigation it will doubtless appear that it is both correct and necessary.) Knowledge was posited in this answer as that which might and might not be; we call this *accidental*. Let us describe this knowledge. It is evident that in this knowledge Freedom (formal Freedom, with which alone we have to do here) is *thought* (not contemplated) as realizing itself; for then knowledge *is*. It is *thought*, I say, and is thought, of course, as *Freedom*, as undecidedness, and indifference, in regard to the act; as melting together *Being* and *not-Being*; as pure possibility, as such, which neither posits the act, for it is at the same time checked—nor checks it, for it is at the same time posited. In short, the perfect contradiction, as such. (We try to discover here everything in knowledge, for we teach the Science of Knowledge. Thus absolute Being was nothing else to us than absolute Thinking itself, the fixedness and repose in itself, which can never can go beyond itself, the altogether ineradicable characteristic of knowledge. In like manner absolute Freedom is here the absolute *unrest*, mobility without a fixed point—the dissolving within itself. Hence thinking here annihilates itself; it is the above-mentioned absolute *hiatus* and *saltus* of knowledge which arises absolutely with all Freedom and all *originating*, and hence whenever *reality* originates from necessity. It is clear that through such a positive not-Being of itself knowledge passes to absolute Being. It is, of course, evident and admitted that of itself it is nothing; indeed, none of the links of our chain of reasoning is here for itself. It is a turning-point of absolute knowledge.

(Everything but this the logically trained Thinkers can comprehend. They shrink back from the *contradiction*. But how, then, is the proposition of that logic of theirs possible which says that no contradiction can be thought? They must have

taken hold of or thought this contradiction in some manner or another, since they make mention of it. If they would only once carefully question themselves, how they come to the Thinking of the *merely* possible, or the accidental (the not-necessary), and how they manage to do it. Evidently they jump *through* a not-Being, not-Thinking, &c., into the absolutely immediate, the free, the in-itself-originating—precisely the above contradiction actually realized. The impossibility to comprehend this produces in logical Thinking nothing less than a complete denial of Freedom, the absolute fatalism, or Spinozism.)

But this Thinking of formal Freedom is again, as we have seen above, possible on condition that the formal Freedom inwardly realizes itself in the manner described above. This realizing is now also *thought* in the present connection; for the entire disposition of knowledge, as regarded here, is one of *rest* and fixedness in itself. By this means, the lower contemplation becomes itself (i. e. to the reposing Thinking) a *Being* (condition, state), which, although it is and remains within itself agility, nevertheless conditions thinking, since it takes it from its balancing between Being and not-Being, in which it rested while a mere possibility, and fixes it down to positive Being.—Here we begin to get a clear view of subjectivity and objectivity, of ideal and real activity of knowledge. This duplicity arises from Thinking (which originates out of mere possibility) and from contemplation, which generates itself absolutely from itself (from realized Freedom) and is added as a new link.

Contemplation as contemplation, as that what it is, is only in so far as it realizes itself for itself with absolute Freedom. But this Freedom is posited in Thinking, so that this act, which produces the contemplation, could also be *not*, and only on this supposition is it an *act*; and since it is nothing else but an act, is it at all. Here, consequently, we already discover, through an easy and surprising observation, Contemplation and Thinking inseparably united in a higher contemplation, and the One not possible without the other. Knowledge, therefore (in the more limited meaning of the word, i. e. the actual knowledge which posits itself as such), does no longer consist in the mere contemplation, or in the mere Thinking,

but in the melting together of both. The form and the substance of Freedom is united, and so is also reality and possibility; since reality (as could not be otherwise) is merely the realization of possibility, and possibility (from this point of view, for we may arrive at another view of it) is nothing but a degree of reality; or, more strictly, is the reality, which is checked, in the reflection, in its transition from its possibility to its realization.

Let us ascend now to an adjoining link, which can receive nowhere so much light as in this connection. We introduced this argument by saying: *That* a knowledge is at all is accidental; but *if* a knowledge is, it is necessarily grounded in Freedom. The first part of this proposition we have explained; in the latter part, we evidently mention something concerning a knowledge which *may* be posited simply by means of the *If*, but which otherwise has neither been posited, nor not been posited. We go beyond this knowledge, and assert something about it with absolute necessity. Evidently this assertion is an absolute, unchangeable, in-itself-reposing Thinking of knowledge according to its absolute Being and Essence. Everyone sees that this assertion is not produced indirectly by the mere actual knowledge that a knowledge is (for the present instance, let us say) and has been produced by absolute Freedom, but that it must have an entirely different source; and here we arrive by another way to a more thorough and connecting reply to the question, how a knowledge of necessity can be possible? For as sure as the absolute knowledge (in the infinite facticity—actual existence—of each single knowledge) is only in the absolute form of the *For-itself*, so sure each knowledge goes also beyond itself; or, viewed from another point, is in its own Being absolutely outside of itself, and encircles itself *entire*. The *For-itself* Being of this encircling, as such, its inwardness and absolute reposing upon itself, which is of course necessary since it is a knowledge, is the just described Thinking of the necessity of the Freedom of all knowledge. The pure, inner necessity consists in this very reposing upon and not being able to penetrate beyond itself of *Thinking*; its expression is absolute essence or fundamental character (here, of knowledge); and the external form of necessity, the universality, consists in

this, that I absolutely can think every factual knowledge, however distinct and different it be from other knowledges, as a factual knowledge only with this defined fundamental character. Where, then, does all necessity come from? From the absolute comprehension of an absolute *Form of Knowledge*.

We have thus arrived at a new union. The contemplation of absolute knowledge, *as accidental* (containing an actual substance, determined in one way or other), is united with the Thinking of the necessity (i. e. the necessity conditioned by Being) of this accidentalness; and in this absolute knowledge reposes, and has exhausted its fundamental character *for itself*.

To explain:—Some one might say, all knowledge (in its infinite determinability, the source of which we, it is true, do not know as yet, but which we presuppose in the meanwhile historically) is comprehended and discovered as absolutely generating itself, which is impossible for two reasons, the second of which we have just mentioned. The real state of the matter, however, is as follows:—Knowledge is the contemplation of the described absolute Thinking of the accidentalness of the (factual) knowledge. Knowledge *is* not free because it is thought free, nor is it thought *free* because it *is* free, for between both these links there is no Why or Therefore, no distinction whatever; but the *Thinking itself free* and the *absolutely being free* of Knowledge is one and the same. We are speaking of a Being of Knowledge, consequently of a *For*; of an *absolute* Being of Knowledge, consequently of a *For in Thinking* (a reposing within itself), in which it completely penetrates itself to its very first root.

C.—Both are one and the same: Knowledge is necessarily free if there is a knowledge, but that there is Knowledge depends upon absolute Freedom; its thinking itself free and its being free are one and the same; the condition is not without the act, nor the act without the condition.

Back to the standpoint of the complete synthesis.

Through the itself realizing contemplation, the previously free and in-freedom-reposing-thinking becomes fixed; being no longer a *real*, factual, conditioned thinking;—and this thinking is thus fixed for itself. In *actual* thinking, as such, formal Freedom is annihilated; it is a contemplation, but on no ac-

count is this same contemplation at the same time not. The Not-Being, which was thought together with it in formal Freedom, is here (i. e. in so far as the Real and not the merely Possible is thought) annihilated; and this very annihilation of formal Freedom must be thought if the real Thinking is to comprehend itself as real and confined—if, therefore, it is to be for itself. (Hence the Subjective and Objective, the Upper and Lower in knowledge; the unchangeable Subjective, or the ideal activity, is the formal Freedom: either to be, or not to be: here, however, viewing itself as cancelled; the unchangeable Objective, the Real, is the confinedness as such, through which formal Freedom, however, as indifference of Being and Not-Being, is cancelled. We have explained here also the Thinking of the Accidence, or what in the Science of Knowledge signifies the same thing, of the Accidence itself. It is a Thinking in which formal Freedom is posited as cancelled; a confined Thinking, as all Thinking is, which, however, at the same time, is thought as confined for and within itself.)

All this becomes clear and productive only when we compare and connect it with its nearest adjoining links.—We said above: We cannot think a fact, as such, without thinking at the same time that it could also *not* be. Here again we thought accidentalness and united formal and real Freedom, the existence of the former and its cancelling through the latter, in one thinking, just as we do here. Now, are both one and the same, or different? The more similarity there is between the two, the more necessary is it to distinguish them, and the more productive of results the distinction; for, I say, both are not the same at all.

That previous thinking starts from the thinking of Freedom, reposes in this Nothing and contradiction of pure undecidedness (B) as its focus; and is consequently, whenever it reflects upon and seizes itself (as it does in the above thought) in order to get out of itself to the fact, a mere nothing, it is ephemeral, dissolving and cancelling itself. Consequently the fact, seized in such a moment, which is to be, although it could just as well *not* be, is likewise reflected and seized only as undecided and dissolving within itself, as the external form of a fact, without inner reality and life; as a point, it is true, but as a point which is never at rest, and which strays in the infinite

empty space, in a pale, lifeless picture; nothing but the mere beginning and attempt of a real thought and determining which never arrives at a real fact.

(It seems to us, that Philosophy might explain itself without difficulty on this question as something generally known not only to not-philosophers and to the empty, purely logical philosophers, but also to the public at large. For this sort of thinking is of the very kind which they have been cultivating the greater part of their lives; *that empty, desultory thinking which results when somebody sits down in order to think and reflect, and cannot tell you afterwards what he has thought about, or what thoughts have really occupied his time.* Now, how have these people existed during this time, since they must have existed in some way! *They have floated in the not-Being of real knowledge, in the standpoint of the absolute,* but where from sheer absoluteness no thought was able to form itself.* It will appear, that the greater part of the system of knowledge of most men remains stuck in the Absolute; and that to us all the whole infinite experience which we have not yet experienced,—in short, *eternity*—and hence, indeed, the objective world remains also hidden in that very Absolute.)

The present thinking, on the contrary, stands within itself in its own confinedness; reposes, if we may say so, as if lost in this confinedness, in order to proceed progressively from it to the understanding that formal Freedom has been cancelled in this confinedness. In its root it is always factual, and proceeds only thence to the absolute, and only to the mere negation of it; while the former thinking was absolute in its root, and proceeded merely to an empty picture of a fact.

Now this confinedness is, as we know, a taking hold of itself on the part of knowledge, and its result is contemplation or light. To this therefore, to this state of light, thinking is confined by the above described cancelling and fixing of formal Freedom; or, to use a more common expression, by *Attention*, which is nothing but Freedom surrendered to the object you pay attention to, a forgetting of self, a confinedness, fixedness of thinking, &c., &c. It is apparent, therefore, that formal Freedom is *Indifference* to Light and Attention; it may surrender itself to them, or it may not; the very desultory,

in-itself-dissolving thinking, mentioned above; the floating in the absolute.

Now, how does knowledge know that it has thus taken hold of and holds itself? Evidently, immediately; for the very reason that it knows or thinks itself as the Holding; in short, through the *That* of formal Freedom. Again, how can knowledge obtain a sight of this *That*—the same formal Freedom—except by having sight (by being a For-itself)? Its light is dependent upon its Freedom; but since this Freedom is *its own*, Freedom is again dependent upon light, is only *in light*. Knowledge knows that it holds itself and is thus the absolute source of light, and this constitutes its absoluteness; and, *vice versa*, it knows and has light only in so far as it holds itself with absolute Freedom (is *attentive*), and knows that it does so. It cannot be free without knowing, nor know without being free.

Ideal and *real* views are altogether united and inseparable; the condition with the act, the act with the condition; or rather, in absolute consciousness they are not all divided, but are One and the same.

This absolute knowledge now makes itself its own object; firstly, in order to describe itself as absolute. This is done, according to the above, by constructing itself from out of not-Being; and this construction is itself internally an act of Freedom, which is however here lost within itself.

It is evident, however, that it cannot so construct itself without being; consequently without having, in some view, a fixed existence. If, in one of these views, it starts from its condition of Light, it will posit the *act*, Freedom, as the cause of Light; and should it reflect again upon itself in this positing, it will become aware that it could not see this act, unless by the presupposed light, immanent within itself, and then it will obtain an *idealistic* view of itself. If, on the other hand, it starts from Freedom as the act, it will view the light as the product of this act, and will thus be led to view the *original* Freedom as the *real* ground of Light, and view itself realistically.

But according to the true description of absolute knowledge which we have now drawn, it views itself in the one way as well as in the other only onesidedly. Consequently neither the one, nor the other view, in contemplation, but both united

in Thinking, constitute the true view, which is the basis of both these contrary views of contemplation, and upon it alone shall we be able to build anything.

§ 3. SYNTHESIS OF THINKING AND CONTEMPLATION, OR SUBSTANCE AND ACCIDENCE IN ACTUAL KNOWLEDGE.

A.—Knowledge posits itself for itself as a Self-originating, and hence posits a Not-Being of Itself, or an Absolute Pure Being (Check), as its origin and limit: Thinking or Substance.

The conception of absolute knowledge having been exhausted in all respects, and we having found at the same time how it could thus exhaustively comprehend itself, or how a Science of Knowledge could be possible, we now rise to its highest origin and ground.

Besides the conception of the Absolute, established at the beginning, we have in our last investigations obtained a still clearer conception of the form of the Absolute: namely, that in relation to a possible knowledge it is a pure, altogether and absolutely within itself confined Thinking, which never goes beyond itself to ask the Why of its formal or material Being, or to posit a Because of it, even though it were an absolute Because; in which, on the very account of this absolute negation of the Because, the *For-itself* (knowledge) has not yet been posited, and which, consequently, is in reality a mere pure Being without knowledge, although we have to make this Being discernible in our Science of Knowledge from the standpoint of the absolute pure form of Thinking.

Knowledge therefore, as *absolute* and confined in its origin, must be designated as the *One* (in every sense of the term, of which indeed it receives several only in the relative), as ever the same unchangeable, eternal, and ineradicable *Being* (God, if we persist in connecting him with knowledge and leaving him a relation to it), and in the state of this original confinedness as *Feeling*=A.

Nevertheless, this Absolute is to be an absolute *knowledge*; it must therefore be *for* itself, which it can become, as we have seen, only in a fact, through the absolute realization of Freedom—in so far being simply *because* it is—by going beyond itself, and again generating itself, &c., which ideal series we have also completely exhausted=B.

Now—which is least important, but cannot be neglected—since as knowledge it generates B with absolute Freedom, but *within* knowledge—it will probably know also of this Freedom as the ground of this knowledge (=F—B).

Again—which is more important—this B is not to be merely a knowledge for and of itself as the product of Freedom,—which, even though it were possible in itself (although it cannot be so according to all former explanations, since the consciousness of Freedom can develop itself only in and *from out* of its own confinedness) would result in a completely new knowledge not at all connected with A; but B, according to our former deductions, is to be a For-itself of A in and through B. B must not tear itself away from and lose A.; for if it did, there would be no absolute knowledge at all, but merely a free, accidental, empty, unsubstantial knowledge.

From this follows, first of all, a simply immediate, and in-itself- absolute connection of A and B, $\left(\begin{smallmatrix} A \\ + \\ B \end{smallmatrix}\right)$ which, it is true, is not without B (the realization of Freedom); but which, if B is, arises altogether in an immediate manner, and arrives at a consciousness of itself according to its character in A itself; which is consequently known as a *feeling* of dependency and conditionedness; and in this respect we have called A Feeling.

Again: the knowledge B is a knowledge, a *For-itself*. This signifies now not only: it is a knowledge generated through Freedom; but, at the same time, it is a knowledge connected with and expressing the Absolute through the above connection +. (In the foregoing exposition A is added to F; consequently, A—F—B.) We have, therefore,

1. A *For-itself existence*, a reflection of absolute knowledge, which presupposes in itself that absoluteness (A). This reflection undoubtedly obeys its own inner laws regarding the *form* of knowledge, and with the clearer exposition of this reflection we shall soon have to busy ourselves.

2. A appears visibly twice, partly as presupposed prior to *all* knowledge, the substantial basis and original condition of it, and partly in *free* knowledge (B), in which it becomes visible to itself and enters into light (in accordance with the absolute form of the *For-itself*, expressed in the sign +). Where,

then, is the seat of absolute knowledge? Not in A, for then it would not be knowledge; not in B, for then it would not be absolute knowledge; but between both in +.

From this there results the following:

1. Absolute knowledge $\left(\frac{A}{+B}\right)$ is for itself (in B) just as absolutely *because* it is, as absolutely *what* it is. Both, though it seems to be contradictory, must, as we have shown, be kept together, if there is to be an absolute knowledge. The way and mode of this remaining together is to be found in knowledge itself, and constitutes the *formal laws* of knowledge, according to which the entire B is $= A - F - B$. In other words, the whole contents, A, must enter, through the realization of Freedom, F, in the form of light, B.

2. It is *For-itself* ($=F$) simply *what* it is ($=A$)—which expresses the contradiction in the most positive manner—can signify only: its *Freedom* and its *For-itself* or its knowledge is (and for this very reason for *itself*) at an end. It discovers in itself and through itself its absolute *end* and its limitation; in itself and through itself, I say; it penetrates knowingly to its absolute origin (from the not-knowledge), and arrives thus through itself (that is to say, in consequence of its absolute transparency and self-knowledge) *at its end*.

Now this is precisely the mystery which no one has been able to perceive because it lies too openly before our eyes, and because *in* it alone we see everything! If knowledge consists just in this, that it views its own origin; or, still more definitely and with abstraction from all duplicity, if knowledge itself signifies: For-itself Being, inner life of the *origin*; then it is very clear that its end and its absolute limit must fall also within this For-itself. Now, according to all our explanations and the evident perception of each, knowledge does consist in this very penetrability, in the absolute light-character, subject-object, Ego; consequently, it cannot view its absolute origin, without viewing its non-Existence or its limit.

3. What then, now, is absolute Being? It is the absolute origin of knowledge comprehended in knowledge, and consequently the not-Being of knowledge. It is Being-in-knowledge, and yet not Being of knowledge; *absolute* Being, because the knowledge is absolute.

Only the beginning of knowledge is *pure Being*; wherever knowledge is, there is *its own* being already; and everything else which might be taken for Being (for something objective) is this Being and obeys its laws. The pure knowledge viewed as *origin* for itself, and its opposite as not-Being of knowledge—because otherwise it could have no origin—is *pure Being*.

(Or let us say, if people only will understand us correctly, the absolute creation, as creation and by no means as the created substance, is the standpoint of absolute knowledge; this creates itself from its simple possibility, and this very possibility is pure Being.)

That is, this is pure Being for the Science of Knowledge and precisely because that science is a science of *knowledge*, and deducing Being from knowledge as its negation and being. It is consequently an ideal view of Being, and its highest ideal view. Now it may well be that here this negation is itself the absolute position (affirmation), and that our position itself is in a certain respect a negation, and that in the Science of Knowledge, though subordinated to it, we shall find a highest real view, according to which knowledge also does certainly create itself—and accordingly everything created and to be created—but only according to the form; according to the substance, however, after an absolute law (into which the Absolute Being now changes), which law negates every knowledge and being as the highest position. A pure moralism, which is realistically (practically) exactly the same that the Science of Knowledge is formally and idealistically.

B.—But Knowledge posits itself as a Self-originating for-itself, and hence originates itself in this self-positing or preposits itself: Contemplation or Accidence.

a. The in-itself-confined thinking in A can be viewed as inwardly and originally (not factually, since this is denied by its essence) in itself confined and unable to go beyond itself. Such would indeed be its character in relation to a possible consciousness, the origin and foundation of which would be this very in-itself-confinedness, and at the same time the *consciousness* of this confinedness; we have therefore called it *Feeling*;—Feeling, even of this absoluteness, unchangeableness, &c., from which, it is true, we can derive nothing at present, and which is to serve us only as a connecting link. Besides,

it would be a realistical view, if it were and could be any view at all.

b. This A, however, is known in B, though altogether independent of it in *form*, and is viewed in it as an absolute origin, to which, in the same knowledge, a *not-Being* of knowledge necessarily attaches itself from the very nature of knowledge, which otherwise could not be a knowledge or viewing of its own origin. Here A seems to have arisen out of B, and the view is idealistic.

c. Now the important matter here is to us, that this knowledge *inwardly* and *for-itself*, and, let us add, in its immediateness (in its form), is *absolute*; or, which is the same, that the contemplated origin is absolute, or that the not-Being of knowledge is the absolute—expressions which all mean the same, and follow one from the other. It *is* this, means: it is so without the coöperation and independently of Freedom, consequently in a *Feeling* of confinedness; through which the above described feeling of absoluteness enters knowledge, and with it together constitutes the absolute A as real and as independent of Freedom. Thus the realistic and idealistic views are thoroughly united, and a Being appears which exists in Freedom, whilst also a Freedom is made apparent which originates *from out* of Being (it is the moral Freedom, or creation which comprehends itself as absolute creation from Nothingness); and both therefore—and with them Knowledge and Being—are united.

Let us explain:—1. In actual knowledge this is the feeling of certainty, which always accompanies a particular knowledge as a principle of the possibility of all *knowledge*. Evidently this feeling is absolutely immediate; for how could I ever, in mediated knowledge, draw the conclusion that anything is certain unless I presuppose a premise which is absolutely certain in itself? (For where is the drawing of conclusions to commence otherwise? or is absolute Unreason to precede reason?) But what is this feeling in regard to its substance? Evidently a consciousness of an unchangeableness (an absolute in-itself-determinedness of knowledge, of which the *That* is well known; but by asking after its *Why* or *Because*, we lose ourselves in the absolute not-Being of knowledge (=to the absolute Being). In certainty, therefore (=the *for-itself* of absoluteness of know-

ledge), ideal and real, absolute Freedom and absolute Being, or necessity, unite.

2. The *For-itself* existence of the absolute origin is absolute Contemplation, fountain of Light, or the absolute *Subjective*; the not-Being of knowledge and the absolute Being, which necessarily connect with the *For-itself* existence, are absolute Thinking—fountain of *Being* within the Light; consequently, since it nevertheless is within knowledge, the absolute *Objective*. Both fall together (unite) in the immediate *For-itself* of Absoluteness. This, therefore, is the last tie between subject and object, and the entire synthesis here established is the construction of the pure, absolute Ego. This tie is evidently the fountain of all *knowledge* (i. e. of all certainty), from which it follows that, in the particular case of this certainty, the subjective agrees with the objective, or “the representation of the thing with the thing itself.” This is only a modification of the discovered ground-form of all knowledge. (It is therefore very wrong to describe the Absolute as Indifference of the Subjective and Objective, a description which is based on the old hereditary sin of dogmatism, which assumes that the absolute Objective is to enter into the Subjective. This supposition I hope to have rooted out by the foregoing. If Subjective and Objective were originally indifferent, how in the world could they ever become different, so as to enable any one to say, that *both*, from which he starts as different, are in reality indifferent? Does, then, the absoluteness annihilate itself in order to become a relation? If this were so, it would become absolutely Nothing, as it indeed is the contradiction which we have pointed out above, only in another connection; and this system, instead of absolute identity-system, ought to be called absolute nullity-system. On the contrary, both are absolutely different; and in their being kept apart by means of their union in absoluteness, knowledge consists. If they unite, Knowledge and with Knowledge, they also are annihilated—and pure Nothingness remains.)*

d. We have said the origin is an absolute one, from out which and beyond which it is impossible to go. It seems, therefore, to be unchangeable in this *For-itself*; and yet it is

* This is a polemic against Schelling.—*Translator.*

presupposed by it. But the origin is not in this For-itself, except in so far it is realized through absolute formal Freedom (as we have learned to know this Freedom as that which can and cannot be); the origin is not contemplated unless it makes itself; it does not make itself unless it is contemplated (a difference of subject and object which, strictly, ought to be annihilated here in a unity of the subject, in fact in an *inwardness* of the origin); and it is not contemplated except in so far as this Freedom as such is for itself, or is viewed as in-itself-originating (itself realizing).

If I reflect upon the latter, knowledge appears in regard to its Being generally as accidental; in regard to its substance, however, which is nothing else than that knowledge is absolute, as necessary. From this the double result follows: that a knowledge is at all, is accidental; but that it, if it is, is *thus*—i. e. a knowledge reposing upon itself, For-itself existence of the origin, and on that very account not-Being, Contemplation and Thinking together—is absolutely necessary.

What, now, is that *Being* of Knowledge (inwardly; not according to the external characteristics, which we have become sufficiently acquainted with), and what is, on the contrary, this *Thus-Being* (Determination) of knowledge? The first, like all Being, a confinedness of Thinking, but of *free* Thinking; the latter a confinedness of the not-free, but absolutely in its own origin already confined Thinking. The Thinking is therefore only the formal, the enlightening, but not the generating of the material of the *Thus-Being*; the latter must be presupposed by the former.

But now both are altogether the same, and the only distinction is that in the latter Freedom is reflected upon and everything viewed from its standpoint, while in the former Freedom neither is nor can be reflected upon: that here knowledge, therefore, separates from itself, since in the higher thinking it does not presuppose, but generates itself, and in the lower thinking, on the contrary, presupposes itself for itself.

We have arrived at a very important point. The fundamental principle of all reflection, which is a disjunction and a contradiction, has been found: all knowledge presupposes in the same manner, and from the same reason, its own Being, that it presupposes its not-Being. For the reflection, standing

as it does on the standpoint of Freedom, is a for-itself Being of the origin as an *originating*; and thus the present proposition differs from the former. But the originating, as such, presupposes a not-originating, consequently a Being; and if we speak of the originating of knowledge, as we must, since only knowledge originates (Knowledge=Originating), a Being of knowledge; and if we speak of a confinedness to originating, as we have done here, an equally confined Being, or *Thus-Being* of knowledge: and *this* is the object of the reflection. Knowledge cannot generate itself without being already, nor can it be for itself and as knowledge without generating itself. Its own Being and its Freedom are inseparable.

Visibly the reflection, therefore, reposes upon a Being; is *formaliter* a free, and, in regard to the material, a fixed Thinking, and the result is therefore this: If the formal Freedom—which, to be sure, in itself always remains, but can just as well not be (not realize itself)—does realize itself, it is simply and altogether determined by the absolute Being, and is in this connection material Freedom. Thus the synthesis is completed, in which we can now move freely, and describe it in all directions.

C.—Both are one and the same: Contemplation, or the Freedom of undetermined Quantitating, can be thought only as determined by the original Thinking of an Absolute Being, and the thinking of an Absolute Being is determined by the Contemplating of a Quantitating: neither is without the other.

Let us describe it, then, from a new point of view.

1. A (the absolute Being, pure Thinking, Feeling of dependence, or whatever else we choose to call it, since it really presents itself in these different aspects as the reflection progresses) is reflected *with* absolute formal Freedom. I have said, *with*; the Freedom is added, might be and might not be. But this Freedom is an absolute For-itself; knows, consequently, in this its realization of itself. *What* it reflects, however, is the absolute Thinking; i. e. it thinks absolute; or, the formal Freedom is admitted in this absolute Thinking, and receives therefrom its substance, since it might just as well not be as be, but when it is, it *must* necessarily be *thus*. (Moral origin of all Truth.)

Remark here the absolute disjunction, and in two directions:

a. Knowledge is chained down in A: again it tears itself loose from itself in order to be for itself and form a free Thinking. Both statements are absolutely contradictory; but both are, if there is to be knowledge, *equally* original and absolute. This contradiction therefore remains and can never be harmonized; and this is an external view of knowledge, since its focus is really in us.

b. Let us now approach the inner view by throwing the focus into the reflection itself. The reflection knows immediately of the absolute Freedom, with which it realizes itself, knows free, or knows of Freedom. But now it also thinks confinedly. Both statements are in contradiction, and remain equally always contradictory. (The ground of all opposition, of all manifoldness, &c., is to be found in *confined* Thinking.) But both are also united in this, that the absolute Thinking is the principal, nay, the only possible origin of all free reflection; and thus Freedom is subordinated to absolute Thinking. Here is the ground of all substantiality and accidentality: freedom as *substratum* of the accidentance can and cannot be; but if it is, it is unalterably determined through absolute Being as the substance. (Spinoza knows neither substance nor accidentance, because he knows not Freedom, which connects both. The absolute accidentance is not that which can be *thus* or otherwise; for then it would not be absolute, but merely that which can be at all or not be; which, however, if it is, is necessarily determined.)

The turning-point between both is formal Freedom, and this turning-point is (not arbitrary, but *determined*) ideal and real. My knowledge of the absolute (the substance) is determined through the free reflection, and—since this is also confined, as we have shown—through its confinedness=accidentality. (We know of the substance only through the accidentance.) Or, *vice versa*, placing ourselves on the standpoint of Being, the determinedness of the accidentance is explained to us by means of the substance; and thus the in-itself eternally and absolutely disjoined is united by the necessity to proceed from the one to the other.

2. Formal Freedom, as we have seen, must in this reflection know of itself; otherwise it would not be subordinated to absolute Being, but would dissolve in it. But it knows of itself,

as we are aware, only through contemplation, which is an altogether free floating within the unconditioned separable, and over all quantitability. (That this whole quantitability is altogether a result of the self-contemplation of Freedom, we have proved sufficiently; but it must not be forgotten, since the neglect to remember it leads to dogmatism.) It views itself as free, means: it views itself as quantitating in the unconditioned, expanding itself over *infinity* and contracting itself in a seeming light-point. From this arises, therefore, still another material determinedness, which here, it is true, remains only determinability, and which arises simply from Freedom and its absolute representation in the reflection itself.

Here is visible the disjunction between the absolute formal Freedom (which can only be or not be) and the quantity-contents of it. The first is a Thinking, but a free Thinking; the latter a contemplation, and a *formally* confined contemplation. (I say, formally; for quantitability only, and not a determined quantity, has been posited as yet.) Both are united by the in-itself-dissolving form of Freedom, without which, according to our former conclusions, neither would be at all. It is further evident that this is the groundform of all *causality*. The actual Freedom is ground (cause), the quantity (no matter what quantity), result, effect. It is clear that the *Ideal* and *Real* thoroughly unite here. (Let no one say, that in knowledge a conclusion is drawn from the effect to the cause, although the cause is to be the real ground. Here effect is not at all without immediate cause; both fall together and unite.)

3. Now, according to 1, Freedom is to receive a material determination, i. e. absolute Being. In its nature Freedom is confined to a quantitating, but it has not *within* itself a determining law for this quantitating. (If it had, the necessity for that material determinedness would be done away with.) That material determinedness must therefore apply in the same manner to Freedom as to quantity. (The reader will remark how this is proved.)—Now pay particular attention to the following: The Ego—the immediate, real consciousness—knows not generally, nor does it know particularly of the determination of Freedom through the Absolute, except in so far as it knows of Freedom, or as it posits itself quantitating. Both (1 and 2) are mutually determined through each other.

Both consequently ought to unite—if a knowledge is to be; the determination of Freedom through the Absolute as a material determination—not a formal one, for that is included in the form of Knowledge—consequently as a limitation of the quantitating—and a certain, no longer arbitrary, but through the Absolute determined quantitating; and of both must be known absolutely because it is known—as is always known—and that this is absolute knowledge must also be known in the same immediate manner.

Thus there would occur in no knowledge the determination of the throughout formal pure Freedom through absolute Being, nor, if Freedom be already materialized, the consciousness of the quantitating as the product of that relation; as if this consciousness would first look at that relation, and then quantitate itself accordingly with Freedom; no less would there be found in any knowledge a *quantum* limited through absolute Freedom, as if knowledge could now relate this *quantum* to the original determination of Freedom through absolute Being: but a *quantum* is found with the immediate consciousness that it is determined by the absolute Being, and from this finding all knowledge commences. The union of both links, as a *fact*, takes place outside of (beyond) consciousness. (The result is plain: Truth cannot be seized outside of and without knowledge, and knowledge then be arranged to suit such truth; truth must and can only be *known*. *Vice versa*, we cannot know without knowing something—and if it is a knowledge and knows itself as such—without knowing *truth*.)

D.—Results.

We contract all the preceding into a common result.

1. Knowledge, if it contemplates itself, finds itself as an inner and for and in itself originating. *If* it contemplates itself, I say; for just as well as it might not be at all, it might not be for itself. Its duplicity as well as its simplicity depend on its Freedom. The entrance into the Science of Knowledge is Freedom; therefore this science cannot be forced upon any one, as if it had already an existence within everybody's knowledge, merely requiring to be developed by analysis; but it rests upon an absolute act of Freedom, upon a new creation.

Again: It contemplates itself—this is the second part of our assertion—as *absolutely* originating; *if* it is, being simply because it is, presupposing no condition whatever of its reality. This comprehension of the absoluteness, this knowledge which knowledge has of itself and what is inseparable therefrom, is absolute, is *Reason*. The mere simple knowledge, which does not again comprehend itself as knowledge, is *Understanding*. The common, also philosophical, knowledge understands, it is true, according to the laws of reason (of Thinking), and is forced to do so, because otherwise it would not be knowledge at all; it *has* therefore reason, but it does not comprehend its reason. To such philosophers their reason has not become something inward, something for itself; it is outside of them, in nature—in a curious sort of soul of nature, which they call God. Their knowledge (understanding) posits therefore *objects*, precisely externalized reason. All the certainty of their mere understanding presupposes in an infinite retrogression another certainty; they cannot go beyond this retrogression, because they do not know the fountain of certainty (the absolute knowledge). Their actions (prompted merely by the understanding) have an *end*, also externalized reason from another view; and even this separating of reason into a theoretical and practical part, and of the practical part into the opposition of *object* and *end*, arises from neglect of reason.

2. In this contemplation of the originating, knowledge discovers a not-Being, which moves up, if we may say so, to the former without any coöperation of Freedom; and in so far as this originating is absolute, this not-Being is also an absolute not-Being, which can be neither explained nor deduced any further. The not-Being is to precede the originating as a fact; from not-Being we are to proceed to Being, and by no means *vice versa*. (This moving up of not-Being, and its position as the primary, rests also upon immediate contemplation, and by no means on a higher knowledge, &c. True, everybody will say: “Why, it is natural that a not-Being should precede an origin, if it is to be a real, absolute origin; this I comprehend immediately.” But if you ask him for the proof, he will not be able to give it, but will plead absolute certainty. His assertion is consequently our absolute contemplation, expressed in

words, and is derived from it, not *vice versa*; for our doctrine remains one of contemplation.)

3. Now let this thus described knowledge again reflect upon itself, or be in and for itself. This it *can* do necessarily, as sure as all knowledge can do it, according to its ground-form; but it is not compelled to do so. If, however, only the first and ground-view is to remain *permanent* and *standing*, and not to vanish like a flash of light, giving place again to the former darkness, then this reflection will follow of itself; indeed it is nothing else than the making that fundamental view permanent.

This reflection, or this new knowledge, comprehending the absolute knowledge, as such, cannot penetrate beyond it, nor wish to explain it any further; for then knowledge would never come to an end. It attains a firm standpoint, a reposing, unchangeable object. (This is very important.) So much about its form. Let us now investigate its substance.

There is thus evidently in this reflection a double knowledge: 1st, of the absolute originating, and, 2d, of the not-Being accompanying it, which was above a not-Being of all knowledge, but is here, as the reflection must *know* of it, merely a not-Being of the originating; hence a knowledge of a reposing absolute Being, opposed to knowledge, and from which Knowledge, in its originating, starts.

4. Let us view the relation of this twofold in the reflection of it. The comprehending of the absolute Being is a Thinking, and, in so far as it is reflected upon, an inner Thinking, a Thinking for itself. The For-itself of the originating, on the contrary, is a contemplation. Now neither the one nor the other alone, but both are reflected as the absolute knowledge. Both, therefore, must be again joined together in their mutual relation as the absolute knowledge. And firstly, since Freedom for itself is an undetermined quantitating, but is only through absolute Being (original Thinking, or whatever you choose to call it), this determination in knowledge must be that of a quantitating. (I say, expressly, in knowledge, as such, and thereby knowledge rises above itself, comprehending and separating *its own*, immanent law from the absolute.)

This is comprehended as absolute knowledge, means:—some particular quantitating is immediately comprehended as

that which is demanded by absolute Being or Thinking, and only in this falling together of both does *consciousness* arise. It is to be hoped that the whole matter is clear now, and every one can judge whether he understands it by answering the following questions :

Ques. In what standpoint or focus does absolute knowledge commence? or—which is the same—where does all relative knowledge stand still, where is it at an end, and where has it encircled itself?

Ans. In the knowledge of a particular quantitating as determined through absolute Being=A. Not in the knowledge of the quantitating by itself, nor of the determinedness of the same through absolute Being; but in the—not *Indifference*, but—*Identity-point* of both; in the imperceptible, consequently not further comprehensible or explainable, unity of the absolute Being and the For-itself Being in knowledge, beyond which even the Science of Knowledge cannot go.

Ques. Whence then, now, the *duplicity* in knowledge?

Ans. Formaliter: from the absolute *For-itself* of this very knowledge, which is not chained down to, but penetrates beyond, itself; from its absolute form of reflection, which on that very account includes infinite reflectibility: the free talent of knowledge (which can therefore be or not be) to make each of its own states its object, and put it before itself to reflect upon. *Materialiter*: Because this thus *found* and not *generated* knowledge is a *Thinking of an absolute quantitability*.

Ques. Whence, then, now in knowledge the *absolute* Being and the *quantitability*?

Ans. Even from a disjunction of that higher, the Thinking and the Contemplation in reflection. (Knowledge finds itself and finds itself ready-made; applied *Realism* of the Science of Knowledge.)

Ques. Is then, now, the Contemplation equal to the Thinking, or the Thinking equal to the Contemplation?

Ans. By no means. Knowledge *makes* itself neither of these two, but finds itself as both; although, *as* finding itself constituted by both, it indeed makes itself, since it elevates itself by its own Freedom (free reflection) to this highest idea of itself.

Now, in this very point the knot of the absolute misunderstanding of our science is to be found. (I shall never live to experience that this *is understood*, i. e. penetrated and applied!) Knowledge makes itself, according to its *nature*, its *ground-substance*: this is half, superficial *Idealism*. The Being, the Objective, is the first; knowledge, the *form* of the For-itself-Being follows from the nature of this Being; this is empty *Dogmatism*, which explains nothing.—Both must be kept apart in the conception of them and both also must be reconciled and united, as we have done here, according to their relation and position in reality—and this is *transcendental Idealism*. This discovered duplicity, however, is nothing else than what we have heretofore termed *Thinking* and *Contemplation* in their most original significance, and their relation to each other, whereof now.

Ques. Whence then, now, the relation of both to each other in knowledge? (I say, in knowledge, since only in knowledge a relation is possible.)

Ans. Because Thinking is the in-itself *firm* and *immovable*—penetrated by the real, by Being, and penetrating it—subjective-objective in *original* unity; therefore absolute cognizability, the real substantial basis of all knowledge, &c., &c.;—and because contemplation is *mobility* itself, expanding the above substantial (of Thinking) to the *infinity* of knowledge; because, therefore, the latter is brought to rest by the former, and thereby fixed *for the reflection*, thus becoming an *absolute* and at the same time *infinite* substantial—not a passing-away and in-itself-dissolving—*knowledge*.

This is the *conception* of absolute knowledge; and at the same time it is explained—from the absolute form of knowledge—how knowledge (in the Science of Knowledge) can comprehend and penetrate itself in its absolute conception. The Science of Knowledge explains at one and the same time, and from the same principle, itself and its object absolute knowledge; it is therefore itself the highest Focus, the self-realization and self-knowledge of the absolute knowledge, as such, and in that it bears the impress of its own completion.